



Flathead County Transportation Advisory Committee

Minutes

Thursday, February 4, 2021

Meeting was held via Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/93940470586?pwd=dFFLdEVuWDJrYm4va0ZQZ1BRdmtGUT09>

Meeting ID: 939 4047 0586

Passcode: 621707

Kyle Waterman called meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Members Present: Carla Augustad, Randy Brodehl (Commissioner), Jenny Cloutier, Jeny Covill, Shauna Himsl, Jessica Kramer, Marcy Roberts, Tagen Vine, Kevin Warrington, Kyle Waterman

Staff Present: Lisa Sheppard (Agency on Aging Director), Dale Novak (Transportation Manager), Kristina Stone (Transit Office Coordinator), Elizabeth Wood (Dispatcher)

Guests: Bryce Baker (My Place Hotel Manager), Rayne Beach (community member), Ron Catlatt (Regional Director, Office of Senator Steve Daines), Ma'ayan Dembo (Transit Fellow, Glacier National Park), Mary Riddle (Chief of Planning and Environmental Compliance, Glacier National Park), Patrick Sanders (MTDPHHS)

Call to Order: TAC Chair Kyle Waterman opened the meeting.

Public Comments: There was no public comment.

Chair Opening Remarks: Kyle welcomed everyone to the meeting. Members and guests introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the December 9th and January 7th meetings were reviewed. Tagen moved to approve the minutes. Second by Jeny Covill. All in favor. Motion Passed.

Lisa thanked everyone for their time and their valuable feedback at the December and January meetings. She explained the presentation and voting process for today's meeting.

FY 2022 Transportation Coordination Plan – Lisa Sheppard

- Lisa presented the FY 2022 Transportation Coordination Plan, following the document provided ahead of time.
- Members and guests asked questions and made comments relative to commuter routes and services, fleet size and vehicle mix, youth ridership, specifics/timeline regarding new routing software and potential planning/funding partners. Based on feedback, Lisa will revise the Plan prior to Commissioner vote to include:
 - Reference to West Glacier as a specific commuter destination

- Glacier National Park and the Forest Service as additional potential funding/planning partners
 - The addition of accessible vans to our fleet and the impact on service delivery
- Kyle noted that it is very nice to see some of the items we have had as priorities over the years dropping off the list having been accomplished.

5311 Application/Budget – Lisa Sheppard

- Lisa presented the FY 2022 5311 Application and budget, referencing the documents provided prior to the meeting.
 - Lisa noted the reduction in TransADE funds from \$172,000 in FY 2021 to \$114,000 in FY 2022 as a result of decreased rental car fees due to Covid.
 - The total net reduction for FY 2022 is about \$43,000 as 5311 funds increased slightly.
 - We are submitting a “placeholder” amount of \$25,000 for fares as we have yet to determine when or at what level to reinstitute fares.
 - The bulk of local matching funds are from county tax dollars (voted mill) but also include advertising/sponsorship revenue, contracts like DPHHS, city contribution and donations like the one from the Logan Health Foundation.

Capital Request – Dale Novak

- Dale said “a calm sea never made a good sailor” noting the Covid-related challenges of the last year. He reviewed ridership numbers FY 2020 and FY 2021 to date compared to FY 2019. He also pointed out the popularity of the new On Demand service highlighting the climbing number of both rides and unduplicated riders and noting that On Demand ridership is now just shy of the combined ridership of the former fixed/paratransit services prior to the transition in August 2020.
- Dale went through the Capital Requests, Priorities One through Four, which are all ADA accessible minivans. He offered data showing how the vans are more economical and versatile to operate for demand response service and noted we already have an adequate number of larger vehicles (some of which are on order from last year but have not yet been delivered) to support commuter routes and any fixed routes we might add in the future.
- Dale also mentioned the vans do not require a CDL driver, which saves money and makes it easier to hire drivers.
- Dale noted we considered and researched electric hybrid models, but there are not currently any on the market that would work for us. We’re hoping that will change in the next year or two as there are a number of new electric vehicles on the verge of coming to market.
- Dale mentioned we can also use the vans to support partners to provide transportation, including volunteer driver programs.
- The vans will replace older, high mileage buses as noted in each of the priority write-ups.

Motion- Tagen moved to approve the FY 2022 Transportation Coordination Plan with the changes noted above. Shawna seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion- Jeny Covill moved to approve the FY 2022 5311 Application and Budget and Capital Requests, Priorities One-Four. Tagen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Closing Comments

- Lisa thanked transit staff for the work they put into the Plan and how committed they all are to providing high-quality service.

- Kyle stated that it has been great watching the Plan in action over the years. He also pointed out that many have mentioned that as a TAC we should be using the service and encouraged those who have not done so to give it a try.
- Marcy mentioned that she has resolved her Lakeside transportation issues due to a donation to purchase an accessible van.
- Jenny Cloutier said she loves the new wraps and commented on all of the great press we have received on the rebranding. She was excited to see articles in the Flathead Beacon and the Daily Inter Lake and featured on local news.
- Kyle reminded everyone that we still have 2 positions open on the TAC. The application instructions are posted on the Commissioners' page on the county website. The deadline to apply is February 25th.

Next meeting to be held April 1st.

Meeting Closed at 3:38 p.m.